

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3610

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMCONSUL DURBAN

AMCONSUL JOHANNESBURG

AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, WA

SUBJECT: NAMIBIA: DUPLESSIS RESIGNS AS MP; DAMARA PROPOSALS
FOR CONFERENCE

1. A.H. DUPLESSIS, NEWLY-APPOINTED LEADER OF WHITE DELEGATION TO NAMIBIAN CONSTITUTIONAL TALKS, ANNOUNCED JANUARY 13 THAT HE IS RESIGNING AS MEMBER OF SA PARLIAMENT. DUPLESSIS TOLD PRESS THAT HE MADE DECISION IN ORDER TO DEVOTE HIMSELF EXCLUSIVELY TO WORK OF CONFERENCE. HE EMPHASIZED THAT RESIGNATION HAD NOTHING TO DO WITH CONTINUING SPECULATION THAT PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION FOR NAMIBIA MIGHT BE ENDED. DUPLESSIS QUOTED AS SAYING, "ENDING PARLIAMENTARY REPRESENTATION FOR SOUTH WEST AFRICA WILL DEPEND ON WHAT IS DECIDED AT THE CONSTITUTIONAL CONFERENCE". THERE HAS BEEN NO ANNOUNCEMENT REGARDING HOLDING OF BY-ELECTION FOR VACATED SEAT.

2. IN REGARD TO CONFERENCE, LEADER OF DAMARA GROUP ATTENDING TALKS, E.H.L. CHRISTY, ISSUED STATEMENT IN WINDKOEK JANUARY 6 WHICH LISTED SIX POINTS DAMARA'S PLAN TO INTRODUCE AT NEXT
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SESSION OF CONFERENCE IN MARCH. ACCORDING PRESS REPORTS

POINTS INCLUDED A) GRANTING OBSERVER STATUS AT CONFERENCE TO UNITED NATIONS; B) INCREASED CONTACT WITH BLACK AFRICAN STATES; C) ALLOWING POLITICAL PARTIES TO PRESENT VIEWS TO CONFERENCE; D) POSSIBILITY OF ALLOWING POLITICAL EXILES TO RETURN TO SWA; E) GRANTING CONFERENCE STATUS AS "INTERIM GOVERNMENT" IN ORDER TO EFFECT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES IN TERRITORY, AND F) ACCELERATED ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND POLITICAL EDUCATION AND DEVELOPMENT.

3. COMMENT: IT HAS BEEN EXPECTED THAT DUPLESSIS WOULD FOLLOW UP RESIGNATION FROM SA CABINET WITH RESIGNATION OF PARLIAMENTARY SEAT. QUESTION OF CONTINUED SWA REPRESENTATION IN SA PARLIAMENT HAS BEEN TOPIC OF MUCH SPECULATION IN TERRITORY, BUT FEW OBSERVERS FEEL SUCH REPRESENTATION IS LIKELY TO BE ENDED BEFORE MORE SUBSTANTIAL PROGRESS IS MADE AT TALKS. BY-ELECTION FOR WINDHOEK SEAT, WHICH PROBABLY WILL BE THREE-WAY TUSSLE BETWEEN NATIONAL PARTY, FEDERAL PARTY (FORMERLY KNOWN AS UNITED PARTY), AN ULTRA-RIGHT HNP, SHOULD PROVIDE SOME INDICATION OF MOOD OF WHITE ELECTORATE AND ITS ATTITUDE TOWARD CHANGES IN THE TERRITORY SINCE THE 1974 GENERAL ELECTION. POINTS FOR DISCUSSION MADE BY DAMARA DELEGATION, WHOSE PRESENCE AT TALKS WAS RESULT OF PRESSURE BY WHITE OFFICIALS FOLLOWING REFUSAL OF DAMARA ADVISORY COUNCIL AND DAMARA TRIBAL EXECUTIVE TO ATTEND, ADDS NEW DIMENSION TO RELATIVE LINE UP OF GROUPS A CONFERENCE. DURING PREVIOUS SESSIONS DAMARAS REPORTEDLY FOLLOWED WHITE LINE QUITE CLOSELY, BUT POINTS NOW RAISED ARE IN ACCORD WITH OR GO BEYOND PROPOSALS MOOTED BY RELATIVELY MILITANT ELEMENTS WITHIN THE CONFERENCE AND, INDEED, ARE NOT INCONSISTENT WITH NNC/SWAPO DEMANDS. MARCH SESSION OF TALKS MAY PRODUCE MORE SUBSTANTIVE CONTROVERSY THAN PREVIOUS MEETINGS, AS PRESSURE FROM EVEN MODERATE BLACKS INCREASES ON GOVERNMENT TO DEMONSTRATE THAT SUBSTANTIAL CHANGE CAN AND WILL TAKE PLACE.

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